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Feature Paper

[Technology and the Sales Force of Business-To-Business Firms:An Overlooked Key to Organizational Learning?](#)

This paper was presented by Elisabeth Teal and John Tanner, both of Baylor University at the 16th Annual United States Association of Small Business and Entrepreneurship National Conference, held January 17-20, 2002 in Reno, Nevada.

In this study, the authors draw on the theories of organizational design, the resource based theory of the firm, and organizational learning to suggest that technology and the sales force may provide an important key to organizational learning in business-to-business sales firms. Our focus on the development of the sales force to support organizational learning is framed from the perspective of improving the economic performance of the firm. Additional benefits of the firm may include increased customer satisfaction, improved morale among the sales force, and a greater understanding of the power of organizational learning.

To read this entire paper on technology and organizational learning, visit our Web site at <http://www.sbaer.uca.edu/Research/2002/USASBE/pdffiles/papers/04.pdf>

Tip Of the Week

["Emerging E-Commerce Strategies"](#)

Numerous new strategies are being introduced to aid entrepreneurs who are entering the powerful

Internet marketplace. A few of those strategies are worth summarizing.

The 3-P Growth Model, introduced by Ernst & Young, defines three specific stages for a venture pursuing the e-commerce route:

1. Presence - the ramp-up stage where the entrepreneur needs to build an excitement about the specific capabilities or offerings of the venture in the marketplace.
2. Penetration - the "hypergrowth" stage where the entrepreneur focuses on gaining market share and establishing greater virtual integration.
3. Profitability - the managed growth stage where the entrepreneur needs to focus on expanding revenue via business-to-business transactions and increased operational efficiencies.

Another strategy aims at what is being considered the second generation of e-commerce-that is, the advancement from simply getting into e-commerce to pursuing competitive advantages through an understanding of the navigational challenges. Consultants Phillip Evans and Thomas S. Wurster recommend three dimensions that should be understood for pursuit of competitive advantage: reach, richness, and affiliation.

Reach relates to access and connection. It means, simply, how many customers with whom a business can connect and how many products it can offer to those customers. Reach is the most visible difference between electronic and physical business, and it has been the primary competitive differentiator for e-business thus far.

Richness focuses on the depth and detail of information that the business can give the customer, as well as the depth and detail of information it collects about the customer. It hold enormous potential for building close relationships with customers in a future dominated by e-commerce.

Affiliation is the specific interests that the business represents. Until now, affiliation hasn't been a serious competitive factor in a physical commerce because, in general, no company ever devised a way to make money by taking the consumers' side. In contrast, it's a natural progression for pure navigators to affiliate with customers; they aren't selling anything-except, possibly, information-and therein could lie a huge competitive advantage.

"Entrepreneurship-A Contemporary Approach, Fifth Edition" Kuratko, Donald F. and Hodgetts, Richard M., Harcourt College Publishers, 2001, page(s) 20-21.

Call For Papers

20th Annual Entrepreneurship Education Forum

Please join us for the 20th Annual Entrepreneurship Education Forum to be held November 2-5, 2002 in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Forum is being coordinated by The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education.

Submission deadline for papers: March 15, 2002

For more details on the this conference, visit <http://www.entre-ed.org/cnc-for.htm>

Call For Papers

Global Business Conference

Please join us for the Global Business Conference, to be held August 7-13, 2002 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Conference will bring together academicians and professionals from all areas related business fields and related fields to interact with members inside and outside their own particular disciplines. The conference will provide opportunities for publishing researcher's paper as well as providing opportunities to view other's work. Doctoral students are highly encouraged to submit papers to GBCI for competitive review.

Submission deadline for papers: June 1, 2002

For more details on the this conference, visit <http://www.nova.edu/~senguder/istanbul.html>

Call For Papers

2002 North American Case Research Association Meeting

Please join us for the North American Case Research Association's (NACRA) 2002 meeting at The Banff Conference Centre in Banff, Alberta, Canada on October 3-5, 2002.

The annual meeting will feature roundtable discussions where all participants receive knowledgeable suggestions about their cases in a constructive atmosphere. The goal of these workshops is to help authors develop their cases for use in the classroom and for publication in refereed journals, such as NACRA's *Case Research Journal*, and/or textbooks. Cases, case-related papers, and proposals are invited from all fields that use cases as part of their teaching methodologies, including business, education, hospitality/tourism, and health care.

Submission deadline for papers: June 3, 2002

For more details on the this conference, visit <http://www.nacra.net>

Conference

NCED Conference

Please join us for The National Center for Employee Development (NCED) Conference, "Securing Information in an Electronic Age" to be held February 20-22, 2002 at the NCED Training Facility in Norman, Oklahoma. The NCED is the primary trainer for the U.S. Postal Service.

This timely information technology conference is open to all USPS, Federal Government, Industry and Academia personnel. A wide range of IT, Training, Protection and Information Security topics will be presented by leaders in their respective fields, including Jim Golden of the USPS.

For further information on this conference, visit <http://www.fbcinc.com/ntc/>

Conference

2002 Mid-South Marketing Educators Conference

Please join us for the 2002 Mid-South Marketing Educators Conference, to be held March 13-15, 2002 in Pensacola Beach, Florida.

This year's theme is "Teaching Marketing: Challenges in the 21st Century" The conference is dedicated to to improving the practice of marketing education. The focus is on issues that concern you as a marketing educator.

For further information on this conference, visit <http://haas.uwf.edu/midsouth/>

Conference

Global Automotive Conference

Please join us for the 3rd Annual Global Automotive Conference (GAC), to be held April 15-17, 2002 in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

The GAC 2002 will focus on improving four critical areas: Supply Chain and Technology Management; Mergers and Acquisitions; Using Simulation, Modeling, and Optimization to Improve Business Processes; Six Sigma, Balanced Scorecard, and Benchmarking Experiences. The Conference will also target issues that are important to middle managers and practitioners as well as executives of the industry.

For more information on this conference, visit <http://gac.ky.net/uniresources.htm>

Conference

15th Annual Gateway Series for Entrepreneurship

Please join us for the 15th Annual Gateway Series for Entrepreneurship to be held April 18-20, 2002 in St. Louis, Missouri. The topic for this years conference is "Women in Entrepreneurship."

Women entrepreneurs are very important contributors to the economy of our nation and the rest of the world. Although there have been studies of women entrepreneurs, they have been limited in number and scope. The Gateway Research Conference will have academic researchers, educators, women entrepreneurs and governmental policy makers. This mixture will ensure that the research agendas developed will have theoretical as well as practical values. Participants from all fields of research and practice are invited.

For more information on this conference, visit <http://www.slu.edu/centers/jsces/programs.html>

If you have any comments about the SBANC newsletter or if you know of any upcoming small business event to promote, please contact Scott Russell at sdr95002@cub.uca.edu

SBANC Newsletter is provided as a service to the **Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ASBE)** members and the **International Council for Small Business (ICSB)** members.

If interested in becoming a member of ASBE, contact Corbett Gaulden, Jr., at gaulden_c@utpb.edu

If interested in becoming a member of ICSB, visit <http://www.icsb.org/about/join.htm>

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